

**Jerry L. Barker, Chief of Police**  
50 North Alabama Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204



**POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS**

Bart Peterson, Mayor

Tuesday March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003

The Honorable Sharon McPhail  
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
2 Woodward Ave. Suite 1340  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Dear Sharon McPhail:

This letter is in response to your correspondence for information regarding our Missing Persons Unit. I hope the following information will be helpful to your task force for the City of Detroit.

- 1. What is the annual budget of your Missing Persons Unit?** The Missing Persons unit is housed at the Marion County Juvenile Court Facility. The Missing Persons Unit is under the Juvenile Branch, which also includes the Juvenile Investigations Unit. The Juvenile Branch per say does not have a separate budget line. The Juvenile Branch is part of the Criminal Investigations Division, and the police department as a whole falls under the umbrella of the Department of Public Safety.
- 2. How many personnel and their ranks are assigned to your Missing Persons Unit?** The Juvenile Branch has a Captain, and a Lieutenant assigned over the entire branch. The Missing Persons Unit itself has one Sergeant, and six Detectives.
- 3. Are there any precinct level costs or functions that are related to the recovery of missing persons, or children outside of the Missing Persons Unit?** I have included our General Order on Missing Persons and Runaways. The first responder to a Missing Persons Case is the uniform patrol officer. Once he completes the initial assessment of the scene, he contacts a district supervisor. A search of the residence and immediate area is conducted. After this is completed a Missing Persons Detective is contacted to assume control of the situation.
- 4. How many cases does your Missing Persons Unit handle annually, and what is the case closure rate?** The total amount of cases assigned to the Missing Persons Unit in 2002 was 2059. These cases are made up of runaways, missing adults, missing children, and non-custodial abductions. There were 2031 cases cleared, so the clearance rate for 2002 was 98.64%.
- 5. If available, how many of your Missing Person Cases involve children annually, and what is the case closure rate.** Out of the cases stated above, the total number of cases involving children are 1725, with 1701 cleared. This gives a 98.60% clearance rate.

***"Police and Community - Partners in Crime Prevention"***

6. **A description of the departmental policies and procedures for investigating a missing person.** Enclosed is General Order 14.04, which covers our procedures on missing persons and runaways.
7. **A description of the departmental policies and procedures for investigating a missing child.** Please refer to General Order 14.04
8. **Are there any new proposals or initiatives being considered by your department to improve the recovery of missing persons and children?** For several years Engine Company 29 from the Indianapolis Fire Department has handled the Urban Search and Rescue teams for a missing person search. These teams are made up of one fireman, and one uniformed police officer, and they search a defined area for the person or other evidence. Company 29 is also equipped with a mobile command, which can print flyers, and assist with radio operations. We currently have an in-service scheduled for later this month to keep the close working relationship.

Also, in September of this past year we implemented our Amber Alert System. This was set up to locate abducted individuals under the age of 18. A SOP for the alert was created, along with response scenarios. These scenarios included the operation of a phone bank and investigation leads. The entire Amber Alert situation would be run under the incident command system.

Finally, we are sending two officers to training on "Responding to Missing and Abducted Children." This training is free through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and is funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Program. The grant pays for the training and lodging. The department is responsible for meals and transportation. This is a week long training which covers responding and investigation missing and abducted children. After this training session is complete, all but two of my detectives will have attended.

9. **Explain the relationship between the Missing Persons Unit and the Precincts when investigating a missing person / child case?** As mentioned earlier the uniform officers are the first responders. They are responsible for gathering the initial information, and checking the immediate area for the person / child. If the person / child cannot be located in a short time frame, they are responsible for contacting a uniform supervisor who generally calls us. The relationship from this basis is generally pretty good. We have had good results in receiving information from the uniform officers, having district supervisors provide us with support such as officers for an extensive search, and the scene is usually secured upon our arrival. General Order 14.04 outlines the responsibility of the officers and uniform supervisors this assists in determining their responsibility.
10. **How does the Missing Persons Unit keep track of cases and case leads e.g. manually or by computer databases?** We are in the process of setting up a new database that is written in Oracle. Our old database was in DOS (Disc Operating

System). From both of these databases we can generate reports on the number of runaways for a specific timeframe. The new system will be able to search each field on the database for more detailed information. In regards to case leads, each detective is responsible for setting up a case file. In the new case management system there will be a place for a narrative. In this area notes and information can be entered.

**11. How does your police General Orders address investigation and reporting of missing children?** Our General Order (14.04) breaks the Missing Person Investigation down into several areas:

**1. Policy-** This tells what the policy of the police department will be regarding this type of incident.

**2. Definitions** – This area states who is a runaway, and who is a missing person for reporting purposes.

**3. Procedures** – This outlines how the district aides will handle a case, what and what a uniform officer will do if he is stopped on the street.

**4. Reporting Procedures** – This area tells what forms have to be filled out, and where to send them.

**5. Investigative Responsibilities** – This outlines what the first officer on the scene does, the responsibility of the uniform supervisor, and the responsibility of the Missing Persons Detective.

**6. Apprehended Runaway** – This final area tells the different dispositions for runaways.

If you have any further questions either regarding this correspondence, or that are generated from your work on the task force please do not hesitate to contact Captain W. Cris Dahlke at 317-327-6610, for Lieutenant D. Breck Terheide at 317-327-6610. Their mailing address is 2451 N. Keystone Av. Indianapolis, In. 46218. Thank you for allowing us to share this information with you, and I hope you find it helpful in your endeavors.

Sincerely Yours,



Jerry Barker,  
Chief of Police  
D. Breck Terheide,  
Lieutenant Juvenile Branch



# Indianapolis Police Department

## GENERAL ORDER



MISSING PERSONS & RUNAWAYS

NUMBER: 14.04

### I. POLICY

**There will be no arbitrary waiting period before taking a missing person report.**

It is the policy of this department that in the case of a missing person or missing child where the facts are insufficient to determine whether the missing subject was abducted, the victim of an accident, voluntarily left, or foul play is involved, the subject must be assumed to be at risk. If the facts do not indicate that the subject is at risk or that foul play is involved, a reasonable delay between taking the initial report and assigning an investigator to the case is acceptable.

### II. DEFINITIONS

#### A. Missing Person -

- Any child 11 years of age or younger whose whereabouts cannot be determined;
- Any person 18 years of age or older whose whereabouts cannot be determined, and the absence is a significant deviation from normal behavior and cannot be explained;
- Any child 12 or older may be considered a missing person if extenuating circumstances exist; or,
- Any walk-away from an institution such as a hospital, nursing home, residential group home, etc. will be considered a missing person. A walk-away is any person who leaves on their own volition, but does not have the authority to do so.

#### B. Runaway - Any child who is age 12, but not yet 18 years of age will be considered a runaway unless there are extenuating circumstances as defined in this directive.

#### C. Responsible party - Any person with legal authority, custody, or guardianship of a minor or dependent adult will be considered a responsible party. This includes school teachers, bus drivers, school security, and hospital and nursing home staff. In cases of independent adults or legally emancipated juveniles, any employer, neighbor, relative, friend, etc. will be considered a responsible party. Any responsible party can report a person as missing or runaway.

#### D. Extenuating circumstances - Any circumstances which put the missing subject at risk or which indicates foul play. Some examples of extenuating circumstances are:

- Age (under age 12 or elderly);
- Health (sickness, medication, health problems, or *Alzheimer's Disease*);
- Mental condition (incapacitated or retarded);
- Developmental disability;
- Emotional instability;
- Inability to communicate (i.e. deaf, mute, non-English speaking);
- Evidence of foul play;
- Possibility of a dangerous environment or of sexual exploitation;
- A juvenile in the company of adults who endanger the welfare of the child;
- The absence is a significant deviation from normal behavior and cannot be explained;
- Existence of any other circumstances that might jeopardize the well-being of the person, or the person is otherwise at risk; or
- The missing person is not from or familiar with the Indianapolis area.

JERRY L. BARKER  
CHIEF OF POLICE

*Supersedes G.O. 14.04, 10/22/98.*

Effective Date  
June 18, 2001



### III. PROCEDURES

- A. The Indianapolis Marion County Communications Agency (IMCCA) will direct or refer all calls to report missing persons and runaways to the appropriate district office. IMCCA has authority, before referring a call, to make a broadcast or dispatch a district officer if warranted by circumstances.
- B. Members will take walk-in reports of missing persons incidents occurring on IPD jurisdiction, regardless of the district of occurrence. Members are also required to take the initial report on incidents that occurred on MCSD jurisdiction, but the complainant comes to IPD jurisdiction to make the report.
- C. Members assigned to the desk at a district headquarters or resource center, and Building Authority deputies at the City-County Building will take walk-in and telephoned reports of missing persons and runaways, and are required to:
  1. Interview the complainant to determine whether extenuating circumstances exist.
    - a. If extenuating circumstances do exist, notify IMCCA so a description will be broadcast and an officer dispatched to investigate. If there are no extenuating circumstances, a broadcast is not necessary, and no officer will be dispatched. The case will be assigned to a missing person detective who will conduct the investigation.
    - b. Reporting officers not at their district headquarters must contact district personnel by phone or on a secondary radio channel to provide information from the Missing Person Report Form for immediate entry into the Missing Persons Management System (MPMS).
  2. Completely fill out and have the complainant sign the Missing Person Report Form. If the report is taken by telephone, tell the complainant to come to the district office to sign the form.

**NOTE:** Have the complainant bring a recent photo if one is available, and any available information about the missing subject, including birth date, social security number, hangouts, etc.
  3. Fax the completed form to the Missing Persons Unit and Youth Emergency Services. Send the original to the Missing Persons Unit through interdepartmental mail.
  4. Complete an IPD incident report using a preassigned case number and phone it in to the reporting center as a priority 02 report.
- D. District officers stopped on the street by citizens wanting to make a missing person report must:
  1. Comply with paragraph III. C. 1. a. & b. and paragraph III. C. 2., 3., & 4. above, and request a district field supervisor.
  2. If no extenuating circumstances exist:
    - a. Refer the complainant to the appropriate district office to make the report in person;



- b. Assist the complainant, if necessary, to get to the district office to make the report (i.e., help the complainant contact a friend or relative, give directions, etc.).

E. Children under 18 years old abducted by a non-custodial parent

The custodial parent must file a non-custodial parental abduction (NCPA) in person at the district office or at the Missing Persons Unit office. They must have in their possession a court order, signed by a judge, outlining custody. In an emergency (threat of violence, etc.), a uniform officer will be dispatched to the scene.

**NOTE:** An exception to the requirement of having a signed court order would be a single mother who has custody by virtue of giving birth and paternity has not been established in court, and no custody order exists. A NCPA report must be taken.

#### IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. Enter the information from all IPD missing persons report forms completed at or turned in to the district office into the MPMS program of the personal computer. This includes all missing person report forms turned into the district office by personnel staffing community resource centers and by Information Desk personnel.
- B. Fax all missing persons report forms, including forms received from district offices, resource centers and the Information Desk, to the Missing Persons Unit (fax number 327-6620, at all times) and Youth Emergency Services (fax number 917-7707, at all times).
- C. Attach any available photos of the missing subject to the missing persons report form and forward to the Missing Persons Unit.

**NOTE:** Do not fax photos to the Missing Persons Unit.

- D. Log the report on the daily log sheet for missing person reports. A daily log sheet will be maintained at all district offices.
- E. Complete an IPD incident report using the correct report type and person status.

**NOTE:** The incident report type and the person status will depend upon the age of the subject and whether extenuating circumstances exist. Following is a list of incident types and person statuses:

<u>AGE OF MISSING SUBJECT</u>	<u>REPORT TYPE</u>	<u>PERSON STATUS</u>
12-17 (No extenuating circumstances)	"Runaway"	"Runaway"
12-17 (Extenuating circumstances)	"Missing Person"	"Missing Person"
17 and under (When abducted by a non-custodial parent)	Non-Custodial Parental Abduction	"Missing Person"
All others	"Missing Person"	"Missing Person"

- F. Dictate the completed incident report to the reporting center as a priority 02 report.



- G. On runaways from the Marion County Children's Guardians Home (MCCGH), the MCCGH will fax a completed IPD missing persons report form to South District Headquarters. South District personnel will process the report as a walk-in report.
- H. **When the MPMS system is not operational**, the missing persons report form must be faxed to another district whose system is operational. The district must then be contacted by telephone to alert them of the fax. This will allow immediate entry into the MPMS system and assignment of a case number. The form with case number will then be faxed back to the originating district office, where personnel will complete the incident report.
- I. **When the entire LAN network is not operational**, all reporting procedures will be followed as outlined in this document except that pre-assigned case numbers will be used and entry into the MPMS system will be delayed until the system is on-line.

## V. INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Primary Officer

- 1. Interview the complainant to determine whether extenuating circumstances exist.
  - a. If extenuating circumstances do exist:
    - i. Take the report, completing an incident report and a missing person report form;
    - ii. Ensure IMCCA broadcasts a description of the missing subject;
    - iii. Begin an investigation;
    - iv. Contact district personnel by phone or on a secondary radio channel to provide information from the missing person report form to the district headquarters for immediate entry into the MPMS system, and
    - v. Request a district field supervisor.
  - b. If no extenuating circumstances exist:
    - i. Refer the complainant to the appropriate district office to make the report in person;
    - ii. If necessary, assist the complainant in getting to the appropriate district office by helping to contact a friend or relative, give directions, etc.

### B. District Supervisor

- 1. Respond to the scene if the dispatched officer requests a supervisor;
- 2. Coordinate the search;
- 3. Ensure proper radio broadcasts are made by IMCCA giving descriptions, circumstances, medical or special needs of missing person, etc.
- 4. Assign appropriate resources as needed; and
- 5. Request a missing persons investigator, on-duty or on-call, *to respond to the scene immediately.*

### C. Missing Person Investigator

- 1. *Respond to the scene of the investigation and notify the supervisor in Missing Persons; and;*
- 2. Upon arriving on the scene, assume control of the investigation of the incident. Other personnel will then assume a support role.

- D. *IMCCA shall page the on-call missing persons investigator as requested by the district supervisor. If no response is received after ten (10) minutes, the page will be sent again and will also be sent to the supervisor in Missing Persons.*



E. The immediate investigation will end after the person is found or after all leads are exhausted.

**VI. APPREHENDED RUNAWAYS**

A. Apprehended runaways must be taken to:

1. YES/Back To Home, 711 S. East Street, if runaway is **not**:
  - a. a perpetrator of criminal activity;
  - b. in need of medical attention ; or
  - c. a non-resident of Marion County,
2. The Juvenile Justice Complex, 2451 East 25th Street, if:
  - a. the runaway was reported in a jurisdiction outside of Marion County;
  - b. the runaway was on probation at the time of apprehension; or
  - c. the runaway was arrested for another offense.
3. Wishard Hospital if the runaway is in need of medical attention. ■